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# ETHICAL ADDRESSES

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## A NEW NATION AND A NEW DUTY

BY

WILLIAM M. <sup>W. M. Salters</sup> ~~SALTER~~.

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*Declaration of the United States Congress, April, 1898:*

"The United States hereby disclaims any disposition to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island [Cuba], except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people."

*Charles D. Sigsbee, Captain of the "Maine," at the Jubilee Banquet, Chicago, October 19, 1898:*

"I suppose it will be expected that I shall say something about the 'Maine,' but I shall not say much. I will only say, since I am a very interested man, that it accords perfectly with my sentiments that the issue of the 'Maine' was not used as a political cause of war. I have too high an opinion of my own country, its education and its good intention, to want to go to war for revenge. We shall all of us live to see the day when we shall thank God that the policy of this war has been directed in the right channel. We have heard a great deal about the sentiment, 'Remember the "Maine."' I trust that the 'Maine' always will be remembered in the right sentiment, in the right way, but never for revenge. A nation may go to war to punish, but never to revenge—not this nation. There is a general belief throughout the country that our fleets and vessels have gone into action flying the signal 'Remember the "Maine."' It is absolutely untrue. No vessel of any fleet or squadron of the United States has gone into this war flying the official signal 'Remember the "Maine."' I, as captain of the 'Maine,' glory in it."

*President McKinley at the Jubilee Banquet, Chicago, October 19, 1898:*

"With no feeling of exultation, but with profound thankfulness, we contemplate the events of the past five months. They have been too serious to admit of boasting or vainglorification. They have been so full of responsibilities, immediate and pros-

pective, as to admonish the soberest judgment and counsel the most conservative action. This is not the time to fire the imagination, but rather to discover in calm reason the way to truth and justice and right, and when discovered to follow it with fidelity and courage, without fear, hesitation or weakness.

“The war has put upon the nation grave responsibilities. Their extent was not anticipated and could not have been well foreseen. We cannot escape the obligations of victory. We cannot avoid the serious questions which have been brought home to us by the achievements of our arms on land and sea. We are bound in conscience to keep and perform the covenants which the war has sacredly sealed with mankind. Accepting war for humanity’s sake, we must accept all obligations which the war in duty and honor imposed upon us. The splendid victories we have achieved would be our eternal shame and not our everlasting glory, if they led to the weakening of our original lofty purpose or to the desertion of the immortal principles on which the national government was founded and in accordance with whose ennobling spirit it has ever since been faithfully administered.

“The war with Spain was undertaken not that the United should increase its territory, but that oppression at our very doors should be stopped. This noble sentiment must continue to animate us, and we must give to the world the full demonstration of the sincerity of our purpose.

“Duty determines destiny. Destiny which results from duty performed may bring anxiety and perils, but never failure and dishonor. Pursuing duty may not always lead by smooth paths. Another course may look easier and more attractive, but pursuing duty for duty’s sake is always sure and safe and honorable.”

## A NEW NATION AND A NEW DUTY.\*

BY WILLIAM M. SALTER.

A FEW months ago this nation, unable to contain any longer its indignation at the incompetence and inhumanity of Spanish rule in Cuba, took up arms against Spain. It was in itself an ennobling act. Those who believed in peace under all circumstances might not feel this, and also those who felt obliged to be cynical in interpreting the motives of the nation ;† but for the mass of the people, whose hearts had begun to burn within them at a spectacle of wrong so nigh our doors, it was a moment of exaltation when the decision was reached to put an end to it. A Harvard professor‡ has called this an inglorious war. But if one will use words with that nice precision which may be expected from a university professor, it is the one glorious war in the nation's history. The war with Mexico was shameful—whatever its results. The Revolutionary War and the War for the Union were at best necessary. But this war was to

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\* A Lecture before the Society for Ethical Culture of Chicago, in Steinway Hall, Saturday, Oct. 23d, 1898.

† I mean those who urged that selfish commercial interests were at the bottom of the war. I do not deny that these played their part, but it was a subordinate one. The fact must not be forgotten that it was just such commercial centers as New York and Boston that particularly opposed the war, so far as opposition was made anywhere. This was a war of the common people, with old-fashioned American ideas about "liberty" and "oppression." They were first really awakened by Senator Proctor's revelations.

‡ Professor Charles Eliot Norton.

break the chains that fettered another people. It was not necessary for us—and if “glory” ever applies to our poor human actions, it does to one like this.

Our action has brought its consequences—not only without, but within. The pulses of the nation beat more quickly than before. Not for nothing is the enthusiasm, or even the frothy patriotism. Where there is froth there is generally ferment below. There is a new national sense—I mean a new sense that we are a nation. From acting as a great organized body we have come to feel anew that we are members of that body. Not as individuals, but in our corporate capacity as the nation we took up the Cuban cause, planted the flag on Santiago’s heights and far across the seas. Dewey, Hobson, Schley, Sampson, Roosevelt, Wood, Capron, the living and the dead, acted for you and me—or rather, not for you and me, but for all conceived of as that great unity we call the American State. Who has not followed the fortunes of his country during the last four months? Who has not been alternately lifted with admiration and humbled with shame as he has heard of the brave exploits of our soldiers and sailors, and on the other hand of the miserable failures of the War Department to care for our sick and dying, owing in no small measure to the spoils system, that still lingers and festers in our body politic as an unclean thing?

And now the question is, What shall the nation do in the face of the new and unexpected situation in which it finds itself placed? We have broken the power of Spanish arms in distant islands of the East and in Porto Rico, as well as Cuba. Once in the war it was but natural and necessary that we should assail the enemy wherever we could. Had a decisive battle been fought



at once on Cuban soil the war would have ended. The island would have been set free, and as soon as its people had set up an orderly government, our responsibilities would have ceased. A question of the Philippines and Porto Rico would not have arisen. But fate or Providence (to use pictorial terms) would have it otherwise. It was not deemed wise to attack the Spanish citadel in Cuba—Havana—at the outset, and while those in control were making up their mind where else on the island to strike a blow, the guns of Dewey sounded in Manila Bay. In course of time came the victory at Santiago—close following, the occupation of Porto Rico. When, therefore, the peace negotiations were begun, the entire West Indian possessions of Spain were in American hands, and the Philippine Islands (or the most important of them) were virtually, if not actually, in the same condition. This was the new situation that confronted us. What should we do with these unexpected fruits of victory?

Two observations here occur to me. The first is that the very fact we raise the question, that the whole country is raising it, that it is being considered, pondered over, by so many minds, shows that the world (or a part of it) has reached a new stage in moral evolution. Customarily, in the history of the race, such a question as I have raised answers itself. What a people wins, that it keeps. Conquest gives right. Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, would have considered themselves fools not to hold all they could get. But we are forced to question. And it is our consciences that force us.

The other observation is that the Chief Magistrate of this nation gave us the right point of view when he declared only the other night in Chicago, "Duty determ-

ines destiny." There is an irresponsible way of looking at men and events. People say—have said more or less in all periods of history—things are going so and so, and we can't help it. They fold their arms; they have no opinions; they acquiesce. Far be it from me to contend that the human will can control everything; yet the area of human liberty is large, and to say that in this present juncture there is any "manifest destiny" controlling us, that we cannot have our thoughts of what is best, that these thoughts, according as they are clear and strong, cannot have power, and that every one as an individual, and as an individual among individuals, cannot help decide what the issue shall be, seems to me to be sinking into a fatalism worthy only of Orientals. "Duty determines destiny" is a braver word. It is, indeed, a sublime saying, worthy of the head of a free and mighty people. It calls us to ourselves—it clears the atmosphere—it is an appeal to the intellect and conscience of the people to take the rudder and not allow the ship of state to helplessly drift as wind and wave determine.

Putting our conscience, then, to work, what can we say? My hearers, I will not conceal from you at the outset my conviction that there is nothing else at bottom for this nation to do than to keep on the same exalted levels of sentiment to which we rose at the beginning of the war. Not for conquest, but to extend the bounds of human liberty, did the nation call its sons from their homes and firesides and ask them to risk their lives in battle. To conquer Cuba, or to annex her, you could not have raised a regiment. To win opportunities for trade in the Philippines, you could have found few to fight (outside, of course, professional soldiers, and those poor wretches who, such are the cir-

cumstances, will do anything to get a crust of bread). The spirit of the spring time in our national awakening we must keep on to its riper autumn days. "Tell him when he is a man to reverence the dreams of his youth," once said Schiller ; and the charge is to nations as well as individuals. The critical problem, I make bold to say, for America now, is whether in the flush of success, in the exaltation of victory, it can still remember the inspiration that visited it at the start, and keep that exalted mood, nobler than the exaltation of victory, that makes nations capable of sacrifices and of heroic tasks.

At the outset, then, I submit this proposition : It is impossible for the American nation to enter on a career of conquest—impossible, that is, and have any of the American spirit survive. You may extend the American body, but you kill the American soul. An ambitious, self-seeking, unscrupulous republic will sow the seeds of its own downfall. America can choose its course, but if it chooses the wrong one, its doom is sealed.

Putting conquest, lust of dominion, and mere pride of bigness out of our minds, what then ? What, if we must ask, as to Cuba herself ? To this question, the only answer is a simple one : If there is any honor in this nation—I do not say elevation of mind, but simply honor—we must keep our word, and leave Cuba, now that we have freed her, to determine her own destiny, only making sure that in the meantime disorder does not rule there. How long before a properly constituted and really representative government can arise in that long unhappy island remains to be seen. It may be a short time, it may be a considerable period. No reasonable person can construe our pledges to mean that

we must withdraw at once, whatever the practical anarchy into which the country might be thrown. In the interregnum between the old Spanish rule and the new self-rule we have rather the duty to see that life and property are protected—if need be, to protect them ourselves. The Cubans could not have freed themselves; they perhaps cannot at once rule themselves. We should stand to them as a strong elder brother, ready to help, to counsel, but with no selfish thoughts in our minds, helping only to make them capable of self-help. We should do this without fee or thought of reward. If we were ready to risk the lives of our sons in an effort to make them free, and openly declared that no thought of national aggrandizement was in our minds, we can surely give them some unbought thought and time and energy in the task of setting up a free, orderly and responsible government.\* Do not call these utopian suggestions. There are few elements in Cuba that will not recognize our disinterestedness if we show it. Brotherliness need not be officiousness. Every thoughtful Cuban must recognize that unless the Spaniards leave the island *en masse* the task of establishing political institutions representing the whole people is immense—and those who are not thoughtful will not resent our temporary offices, if we discharge them not only with firmness but with equal consideration to all concerned. Any contempt for the native Cubans or any part of the population is sure to work harm. True,

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\* By this I do not mean that the mere expenses of our temporary occupation may not be borne out of Cuban revenues. Nor by emphasizing the fact that we did not go into the war for gain do I mean that we may not have a rightful claim to indemnity from Spain for the mere money cost of the war. Should we waive a claim, this would be out of magnanimity, not from right.

we were disappointed at the numbers of the Cuban forces during the war, and we may be still more disappointed at the political capacity of parts of the population now. Tyranny has done its work—but the more occasion for patience, benevolence and emancipating justice from us.

“Work and despair not.”

This line of Goethe's is the word for the nation. What we can do for Cuba is shown in what General Wood is already doing in Santiago. During our temporary occupancy we can set an example of just and humane government that the Cubans in their own interest will hardly fail to remember. But if we are in Cuba to rule, or, if in the course of time, tendencies to rule develop in our administration, if schemes of favoritism to this party or that or to this American syndicate or that begin to disclose themselves, or if plans of annexation begin to be laid, then we shall be laying up trouble not only for the natives, but for ourselves—and the whole world will have a right to jeer at free America. Fancy a situation in which we should be ourselves fighting the Cubans, fancy us calling them rebels—because, forsooth, they wished to rule themselves! Twould be a sight to make the heavens weep. Ah, friends, we have a trust, you and I have a trust, by voice and pen, to forfend such a fearful possibility.

But the critical question is, What is the right attitude for this nation to take toward Porto Rico and the Philippines? I *take for granted* that the nation has not forgotten and will not forget its solemn pledge to Cuba. Evidently our honored Chief Magistrate has no notion of forgetting; the Peace Commission in Paris bases our refusal to assume the Cuban debt in part upon the fact

that we claim no sovereignty there; and not a party platform nor a prominent public man has ventured to suggest that we go back on our pledges. But the question of Porto Rico and the Philippines is an open one\*—and, just because it is, the fineness of the nation's temper will be judged by the way it deals with it. We have no literal pledges, we shall be judged by our spirit. Shall we keep what we have gained?†

If the question were an abstract one, if we left out of account specific circumstances, the honorable instinct, it seems to me, would be, inasmuch as we did not go into this war for conquest or for pelf, to restore these possessions to their original owner—in any case not to keep them for ourselves. This is not the way of the world; but, then, to wage war with the sole motive of setting another people free is not the way of the world—and to work for freedom *and for profit* is an inharmonious mixture.

In this connection my mind reverts to a legendary incident in the history of ancient Israel. That powerful sheikh, Abraham (so the story goes), hearing that the King of Sodom had been worsted in a battle with some neighboring kings, and that his own kinsman, Lot, a subject of the King of Sodom, had been captured along with the rest, bore down one night with his

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\* It may be said that as to Porto Rico the question is closed by virtue of the instructions given to our Peace Commissioners. But nothing is really settled till Congress acts. Hence there is an interval for public opinion to form itself.

† To be accurate, this is the way the question must be put. Not, Shall we grab? but, Shall we keep what we already have? So far as I know no question of grabbing is now before the American public (there may have been before the annexing of Hawaii, and there may be in the future, if the jingoes get the upper hand among us—but there is not now).

armed men upon the hostile kings, and rescued not only Lot, but the goods and the men of the King of Sodom, too. The King of Sodom appeared before him shortly, and requested simply the return of his men, and said that Abraham should keep the goods as the natural trophies of his victory. But Abraham replied, "I raise my hand to Yahweh, the highest God, maker of heaven and earth, and swear that I will take nothing of what is yours, not a thread or a shoe-latchet." He had done a generous act; he scorned to profit by it. The spirit of that old legendary hero is the spirit for all time. As a Senator from this Commonwealth said a month ago (and I hope he will not forget it), if we are to be good Samaritans, it does not become us to carry a bag on our backs wherein to deposit the profits of our holy calling.\* I am not now saying just what we should do, but if we fail to act in this spirit, if, having gone into this war for freedom we come out of it for conquest, we prove ourselves after all to be what Napoleon contemptuously called the English, "a nation of shop-keepers," not of men—yes, worse, of hypocrites, a charge rarely set down against blunt, bluff Englishmen.

Should we then return Porto Rico and the Philippines to Spain? If Spain were a colonial power like England, I think the answer would be, yes. But there's the crux. I do not wish to say injurious words against the Spanish people—they belong to the brotherhood of man; but no one, not even Spaniards themselves, will defend the methods of Spanish rule. Until there is a political rebirth in Spain, it is hard to believe in her competency to rule a colony. This was the fatuousness

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\* Senator W. E. Mason, as reported in the Boston *Evening Transcript*, Sept. 26th, 1898.



of those who wanted our government to wait last spring, and let the new policy of autonomy in Cuba be tried. It was a sham autonomy, and those who had their eyes open and were not guided by sentiment, knew it. The simple fact is that official Spain has not the will and has scarcely the mind to rule in accordance with modern ideas. Much of Spain's best blood was long ago winnowed out as if it had been chaff by religious fanaticism. It is a depleted stock. The best friends of Spain will wish her to concentrate herself on the work of interior purification and leave for the time world-tasks alone. America has done a service to humanity and progress in causing her dead hand to be lifted from her colonies, from the Caribbean Sea to the Pacific. Misrule may not have been so bad in Porto Rico as elsewhere, and yet the Porto Ricans seemed to have greeted our armies when they landed there as they would an emancipator. How any one, indeed, can propose to return the territory in question to Spain, with whatever asseverations and promises of amendment on her part, passes my comprehension ; it would be to turn the hands backward on the dial of time. They are free—let them stay free.

To my mind, the United States should take the same attitude to them as to Cuba. Let us be to them not a ruler, but a deliverer—and a friend. Let us, if necessary, maintain order till they prove capable of maintaining order themselves—and then let them rule themselves, be masters of their own destiny, we withdrawing our protecting hand, as England did from the Ionian isles in the middle of the century. We are not bound by the letter of the law to act in this way, but only in this way are we in harmony with the spirit which animated us at the start. Technically we are free to do otherwise, to



annex and to keep ; morally and in honor we are bound. In making war on Spanish rule in Cuba, we solemnly declared that no thought of self-interest was in our minds—and to say now, “ No, we make no conquests in Cuba, but we do elsewhere,” is much like quibbling. This is not the way to make the name of America honored in the world. But to set Porto Rico free and to set the Philippines free is only to carry a step further our original mission ; we might not have done it, save in this unanticipated way, but doing it involves no violence either to the letter or the spirit of our first proposal.\*

Yet, I am not unaware that even the provisional duty I have suggested goes beyond what many will allow. It does mean a measure of responsibility—and some will say we should take no responsibilities outside our own borders, or at least that we have saddled a sufficient number of them upon our shoulders in taking temporary charge of Cuba. I have parted company with the Imperialists (if that word has any definite meaning, and I am not sure that it has) ; but there are those on the

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\* In the above argument I leave to one side the question whether these islands might be kept by us on the ground of a rightful claim on our part to an indemnity of some sort for the money expenses of the war. If the islands should be retained in this way, the reasons would be totally different from those arising out of the “right of conquest.” It is only motives and principles that I am discussing in this lecture—and motives and principles may powerfully determine not only the complexion but the very nature of facts in the long run. At the same time I incline to the view that magnanimity is the true policy in dealing with the question of indemnity, and that our relation to Porto Rico and the Philippines should be determined (as urged above) by considerations of duty rather than of interest, however natural and legitimate, humanly speaking, considerations of interest may be deemed to be. In formulating the general view of the text I wish to express obligations to a high-minded statement by my old teacher, Professor John W. Burgess, in the *Chicago Record*, August 13th, 1898.

other hand who say we have enough problems at home, who point to all the manifest abuses in our politics and our industrial life, and urge the setting our own house in order before we undertake to help others in doing the same. The logic of this would have forbade meddling with Cuba, save in so far as it was a nuisance at our doors and the disorder affected our own interests. And, if we were where we were six months ago and the abstract question were before us, Shall we go out and free Porto Rico and the Philippines, and help the peoples upon them to self-rule? no one can doubt what the answer would be—just as no one can doubt what the answer would be to a proposal to embark on the general task of liberating and educating savage peoples now. The trouble is, we have broken the Spanish power in those islands already, and are in possession of them; the question is not, Shall we go to them? but, Shall we leave them? Whether we are badly off at home or not, there we are—and the situation hardly leaves us free to do altogether as we choose. Every one will say, if we leave, it is only with one of three alternatives—either to turn the islands back to Spain, or to intrust the interests of order to some other Power, or to leave the islands in complete independence. And if the first and third are out of the question (above all in relation to the islands most in dispute, the Philippines), then to what Power shall we intrust the keeping of order? The only Power whom we could think of asking, because the only Power that is liberal in spirit and acts on the principle of the “open door,” is England. But would England take the Philippines—not to rule, but to prepare for self-rule? There would be no question of duty in her case, as there is in ours—and it is

likely she would only takes the Philippines as a colony. But, in whatever way she took them, every one who knows the European political situation at the present time must admit that the taking of them would in all likelihood bring on a European war. The only Power that can hold the Philippines now, whether to keep as a colony or to provisionally maintain order in and educate, is America.

One of the greatest statesmen England ever had, one of the few to whom the world still goes for wisdom, Edmund Burke, said: "The situation of a man is the preceptor of his duty." The same is true of nations. Considerations that determine duty in one situation fail of application in another. What is duty here and now, in these existing complications of fact? This is the only way to get duty at all. All else is abstractions—abstractions, it may be, very well worth considering, like those of my honored colleague, Dr. Adler, in the last *International Journal of Ethics*, but still abstractions, because they do not visualize (to use a rather barbarous technical word), concretely picture, the existing situation. Dr. Adler might say all that he does (and on general principles I should say nearly all of it after him), and yet admit that the American authority being planted in Manila and the facts in regard to Spain and in regard to Europe and in regard to the insurgents being of the peculiar sort they are, there is no honorable way out for America save to stay and to maintain order and to gradually educate the natives, with the distinct object in mind of making them finally a self-governing people. Grant that aristocratic England might do better than we are likely to do at first, granting even that there would be a danger to democratic

institutions in having anything to do politically with inferior races (which in fact I could not at all admit in reference to such a species of protectorate as I am now advocating), granting further that the cause of social reform might temporarily suffer among us (which, however, I do not think would be the case), granting still other untoward possibilities, which after all would be only possibilities—yet the question is, and cannot be put by, What are we to do now in face of the definite facts that confront us, and of the responsibilities that inevitably grow out of those facts? One palpable immediate duty is worth a dozen possibilities, and as for the problems that often arise for men and nations in the pathway of duty, and that may gather thick and make the way dark at times for us in the future, I like to think of an old Biblical saying, in which John Bright used to take comfort, that “to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness,” and also of what the Chief Magistrate of this nation said the other night, “Destiny that results from duty performed may bring anxiety and perils, but never failure or dishonor.” \*

As matter of fact and in calm reason, what do the difficulties amount to that are urged against such a course as I have proposed? The real difficulties are against a course of conquest and forcible annexation—*i. e.*, against “Imperialism” (if this is the meaning of the word). About this I have already delivered myself with probably sufficient distinctness. Yet some of the

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\* If the question were one of embarking on a colonial policy simply from considerations of national interest, apart from any pressure of duty, I should think most of Dr. Adler’s argument quite pertinent. The *advantage* of colonies to America may be seriously questioned. See Mr. Bryce’s thoughtful article in *Harper’s Magazine* for September on that phase of the subject.

objections to Imperialism equally apply to a policy of temporary Protectorates such as I have suggested. This, too, would undoubtedly involve us in increased military and naval expenditure, though it must be said that far heavier taxation than we now have could be easily borne if it were rightfully apportioned. This, too, would involve the possibility of our being drawn into the complications of European politics—*i. e.*, of being a Power among the Powers of the great world, instead of a nation set off here altogether by ourselves. If we could in honor avoid this, for a little longer space, I for one should be glad; and if peaceably England could be given in charge of the Philippines, the respite could be had. I think few Americans *want* the Philippines, except traders, who could in any case trade as freely under the British flag as under the American. And yet, sooner or later, so small is the world becoming, we shall be a Power among the Powers anyway. We might as well begin to learn the arts of diplomacy now. We cannot forever plead youth and inexperience as a reason for being allowed to grow undisturbed, quietly, in a corner. Already we are not weak, and we are not incapable, and we really belong to the family of nations, and the great world-problems, including the problems of “inferior races,” are for us to solve as well as them. It is said, democracies are not as fitted to be as helpful in this particular way as aristocracies or monarchies. Democracies are based on the principle of self-rule; they are by nature unfitted to rule others—so the argument goes. What a satire on democracy! We ordinarily think that a man who rules himself is fitted on this very account to exercise wise management over others. If so of an individual, why not of a

people? And if the final destiny of the so-called "inferior races" is self-rule, who so adapted to conduct them to this goal as those who believe in self-rule themselves? True, democratic theories must not be visionary; they must recognize gradations of human progress. Because all men are equal in certain respects, it does not necessarily follow that they are in all; democracy need not be quite lacking in practical sense. As I understand essential democracy, it is a working principle for some and a faith for all; and the faith has never been better expressed than in the language of a great German, Alexander von Humboldt: "There are some races more cultured and advanced than others; more ennobled by education. But there are no races more noble than others. All are equally destined for freedom." This is the great essential idea that democracy—may I not proudly say American democracy?—is to carry to the world. If we accept our charge in the Philippines (supposing we find we cannot commit it to any other), if we accept it in Porto Rico, if we accept it in Cuba, shall it not be everywhere alike, not to rule, save as a provisional passing necessity, but to educate, to elevate, to fit for self-rule? Oh, happy country, if thou shalt choose that course!

The one serious, immediate difficulty is, that we have no experience in doing this sort of work, that we have no machinery already devised for doing it, that we have no civil servants such as England has, that instead we have the spoils system still more or less in vogue, and that Manila and Porto Rico and Havana would only be fresh fields for us to batten in. At first sight it seems like folly to do what we are not prepared to do. But if we have to do a thing, we shall prepare ourselves.



Happily we have already a start. The work will naturally fall largely at the beginning to the army and navy, and it is just in these branches of the public service that civil service principles have a hold—above all in the navy. Here promotion or advancement is based on seniority alone. When a vacancy occurs, it is stated, a captain steps from the head of his grade to the bottom of the list of commodores, and no official power can either retard or hasten his upward movement.\* The system is not so rigid in the army, and “political pulls” are hence more or less in order—and the result is seen in the contrasted leaderships in the army and navy in the late war. The remedy is to make the army like the navy, and to make our whole civil service like both. We can do this if we will, and nothing is more likely to make us will than to take a new departure and to feel a new necessity. Sound civil service principles are making headway in the community every year anyway; it is the set of the tide; the spoils system demoralizes parties, it demoralizes individuals, it makes our management of the Indians a national disgrace—even our practical men among social reformers are beginning to see that there is little hope of social amelioration that does not begin with its abolition. With the army and navy, already more or less graded and disciplined, in the lead, we may hope that fresh demands arising from the necessities of a new situation will lead to an improved civil service for the country all along the line. Doubtless we shall show our inexperience and blunder more or less at the start; doubtless we shall perfect our machinery gradually—but the simple injunction not to go into the water because we have not learned to swim will per-

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\* So H. L. West in the *Forum*, Oct., 1898, p. 174.

haps not be found much sager counsel now than ordinarily in the past. Is it really necessary to say to our wiseacres that the only way to learn to do a thing is to do it—and that, according to all the laws of mathematics, there must be a first time?\*

The bottom fact is, that what this country needs more than anything else is interest in public affairs. "Our politics have become sordid and corrupt chiefly because the general attention has been withdrawn from them."\* One writer attributes this in part to the very fact of "our long freedom from entangling alliances, and our ability to conduct our affairs with little danger of collision with other powers."† We have got easy-going and indifferent to purity and effectiveness in governmental administration. We think little of the nation and much of ourselves. It is possible that the new interest in national affairs, the new sense of the nation as such, the new attachment to it and glory in it, will be one of the levers by which the national life will be raised. Once before in America there was an "era of good feeling." It was after the assertion of the Monroe doctrine. A student of our history, and teacher in one

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\* It may be said after these explanations that the plan of a protectorate differs after all not so widely from that of an actual colony, since governmental machinery of some sort must be used anyway. But all would depend on the purpose and ultimate motive lying back of the machinery. It would not do to say, the facts being the same, the motives would be indifferent. Here the motives would in the end determine the fact. Under the colonial idea there would be an easy consciousness of possession from the very start; under a protectorate there would never be a consciousness of possession, but rather the sense that some day, unless the unexpected happens, our duty would have an end. Taking down the flag would have as much honor as raising it, if it meant a duty done, a task discharged.

\* Professor John Bascom, quoted in *City and State*, Sept. 15, 1898.

† Professor W. McDonald, in the *Forum*, Oct., 1898, p. 183.



of our universities, has remarked that it is difficult for us now to picture to ourselves the enthusiasm aroused by the foreign policy of the early '20s ; the people accepted the idea of leadership in American affairs, and even of a kind of "guardianship over the rights of the new world," and this deeply-rooted conviction gave a moral elevation and dignity to the political life of the Monroe administration which it has not again attained. It is the ideals of the nation, he concludes, after observing how futile have been the attempts in recent years to raise the level of our political life by appeals to the selfish instincts—it is the ideals of the nation rather than the reason and calculation of the individual that constitute the source of civic strength and activity.\* If this is true, those are making a sorry mistake who are pooh-poohing the new national feeling that is rising now. In the same elevation of mind with which the country went into the late war and is now beginning to contemplate the novel responsibilities that have been thrust upon it, it may be led to face the problems that lie unsolved within its own borders. With the strength with which it equips itself for its tasks in Havana and Porto Rico and Manila, it may also assail misgovernment and set up decent and righteous government in Chicago and New York, in Springfield and Albany, and hunt the money-changers out of the temple in Washington itself. It is seriousness, gravity, elevation, that the American people most need, the sense of something more than our own private selves and our own private tasks, the consciousness that we are parts of a greater stream and a greater life. A great nation—*i. e.*, a nation with great tasks, and great-minded citizens go together ;

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\* Dr. Leo S. Rowe, in *Chicago Record*, Aug. 26th, 1898.

if the national life is mean and paltry, do not expect the individual to make any sacrifices for it.

I see the signs of a new nation about me now—it is new because it has trusted its instincts and dared to sacrifice for a sister people's liberty. The awakening is indissolubly bound up with its sense of the claims of humanity out and beyond its own territorial lines. Unexpectedly and yet honorably it can serve the cause of humanity more widely yet. A new and larger duty than it first dreamed of thence confronts it. Not lightly, not vaingloriously, but gravely, humbly, I might almost say solemnly, when I recall the mood in which the President has spoken, I see the nation stepping forward to accept that duty. A flush is on its face, not the flush born of a consciousness of triumph, but the flush of ardent resolve, the flush of forward-looking expectation, the flush of a youth who takes up a task that he knows will try his powers. Go on, brave heart, and never strike sail to a fear. Go on,

“ . . . and let thy Fortune be  
Forgotten in thy Destiny.”

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